

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SCA-01 JUSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6519

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1058

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: PUBLIC REACTION TO EXTRADITION BILL

REF: SAN JOSE 1035

1. AS EXPECTED, THE DELAY IN VOTING THE EXTRADITION BILL HAS GIVEN TIME FOR PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO GROW. THE WEEKEND AND MONDAY MORNING PRESS CARRIED WIDE ARRAY OF COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS. BOTH DEFEATED PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES FERNANDO TREJOS ESCALANTE AND RODRIGO CARAZO HAVE CRITIZED THE BILL AS HAVE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND DEPUTY-ELECT RODOLFO PIZA ESCALANTE-- IN THE NAME OF GONZALEZ MARTEN'S PNI. THE PLN-ORIENTED FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY OF COSTA RICAN STUDENTS HAS RECOMMENDED THE BILL BE SENT TO COMMISSION FOR FURTHER STUDY.

2. THE THREE MORNING NEWSPAPERS HAVE NOW ALL RUN LEAD EDITORIALS ATTACKING THE BILL. DIARIO'S SECOND EDITORIAL ON THE MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE BILL FOR THE SOCIETY IS REINFORCED WITH A TRANSLATION OF TIME MAGAZINE'S ARTICLE THIS WEEK, "MR STANS, HERE IS YOUR CURRENCY," ON THE FACING PAGE. REPUBLICA'S EDITORIAL TAKES AN ESSENTIALLY LEGAL APPROACH, BUT ALSO EXPRESSES ITS DISGUST WITH THE ASSEMBLY'S
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BEHAVIOUR IN VOTING IN TWO DEBATES IN FAVOR OF THIS BILL RIGHT

ON THE HEELS OF PASSING THE BILL ALLOWING TAX EXEMPTION FOR
DEPUTIES' AUTOMOBILES.

3. REPUBLICA'S LEGAL ARGUMENT IS BASED ON THE
APPEALS COURT DECISION AGAINST THE U.S. LAST SUMMER
WHEN IT DECIDED VESCO'S CRIME DID NOT FALL UNDER THE
EXTRADITION TREATY. THE EDITORIALIST NOTES THAT THE BILL,
HOWEVER ONEROUS, MUST, UNDER THE CONSTITUTION, BE LEGALLY
SUBSERVIENT TO THE EXISTING TREATY. LA REPUBLICA ADDS
THAT THE ARGUED NEED BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR A NEW
EXTRADITION LAW -- TO CONFORM COSTA RICAN
LAW WITH THE AMERICAN CONVENTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS" --
AS DESCRIBED IN THE PREAMBLE TO THE TEXT OF THE BILL
IS IN ITSELF SPECIOUS AS THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTION PREDATES
THE LAW WHICH THE BILL INTENDS TO CORRECT. MOREOVER, AS THE
EXISTING EXTRADITION LAW PASSED IN 1971 WAS CAREFULLY STUDIED
BY THE SUPREME COURT AND HAD THE ADVICE OF MUCH LEGAL
OPINION, THE NEWSPAPER BELIEVES THAT AS A MINIMUM
THIS COURSE SHOULD BE FOLLOWED AGAIN.
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